CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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LETTER DATED 19 APRIL 1990 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF EGYPT ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT TRANSMITTING A LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS FROM DR. AHMED ESMAT ABDEL MEGUID, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF EGYPT, CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A ZONE FREE FROM WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND PRESIDENT HOSNI MUBARAK'S STATEMENT IN THIS REGARD

I have the honour to transmit herewith the letter addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations from Dr. Ahmed Esmat Abdel Meguid, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Egypt, concerning the establishment of a Zone Free from Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East and President Hosni Mubarak's statement in this regard.

I kindly request that the letter be distributed as a document of the Conference on Disarmament.

(Signed): Dr. Nabil ELARABY
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Mr. Secretary-General,

The Middle East, as you are well aware, continues to be a highly volatile conflict torn region. Even in these times, where a rising tide of peace seems to be emerging in different regions of the world, as you so succinctly remarked in your report on the work of the United Nations, 1989, " the situation of the Middle East remains a source of profound and intense concern..."

Recent developments in the region have further underscored the importance and urgency of safeguarding the Middle East from the ominous implications associated with nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

Egypt has, for over fifteen years, called for the establishment of a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in the Middle East. This position emanated from our unwavering committment to nuclear disarmament, as well as nuclear weapons non-proliferation, and our deep conviction that the introduction of nuclear weapons into the Middle East would have devastating consequences on the prospects for stability and security in the region, and for the maintenance of International peace and security in general.

Once again the International community, at the 43rd Session of the General Assembly, reiterated its support for the establishment of a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in the Middle East. Resolution 43/65, adopted without a vote, inter alia highlighted certain measures and steps to be

considered by states of the region pending the establishment of such a zone foremost amongst which were; - adherence to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and the application of International Atomic Energy Safeguards to the nuclear facilities in the States of the region.

It is worthy to note that Egypt and the other Arab States that have significant nuclear programmes have undertaken these measures. They have met the standard, universally acknowledged to be a legally binding determination not to acquire nuclear weapons, as well as the verification procedures imperative to assure compliance. Now it is of paramount importance that all States of the region adhere to the said treaty, and accept the application of fullscope IAEA safeguards to their nuclear facilities.

Egypt has also taken an equally forthcoming position and active role in disarmament efforts relating to other weapons of mass destruction, including in particular chemical weapons. It is Egypt's considered opinion that chemical weapons should be dealt with in a comprehensive and global context involving all types of Weapons of mass destruction, whether nuclear, chemical, or biological, in order to ensure international and regional security.

President Hosny Mubarak on April 8, 1990, categorically declared Egypt's support for ensuring that the Middle East become a zone free from all types of weapons of mass destruction. President Mubarak emphasized the following : -

1.) All weapons of mass destruction without exception, should be prohibited in the Middle East i.e. nuclear, chemical and biological,...etc.

2.) All States of the region, without exception, should make equal and reciprocal committments in this regard.

3.) Verification measures and modalities should be established to ascertain full compliance by all States of the region with the full scope of the prohibitions without exception.

Egypt shall continue to work with States in the region, and beyond, towards declaring the Middle East a Zone Free from all weapons of mass destruction, and the establishment of the requisite international verification measures, applicable to all the States of the region on an equal basis. It is our sincere hope that the other States of the region will be equally forthcoming in this regard, as we strive to enhance the prospects for a just, lasting peace in the Middle East,

Kindly accept, Mr. Secretary-General, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Dr. Ahmed Esmat Abdel Meguid

Deputy Prime Minister and

Minister of Foreign Affairs